

COUNTRY DATA: Iceland : Information from the CIA World Factbook

INTRODUCTION

Settled by Norwegian and Celtic (Scottish and Irish) immigrants during the late 9th and 10th centuries A.D., Iceland boasts the world's oldest functioning legislative assembly, the Althing, established in 930. Independent for over 300 years, Iceland was subsequently ruled by Norway and Denmark. Fallout from the Askja volcano of 1875 devastated the Icelandic economy and caused widespread famine. Over the next quarter century, 20% of the island's population emigrated, mostly to Canada and the US. Limited home rule from Denmark was granted in 1874 and complete independence attained in 1944. The second half of the 20th century saw substantial economic growth driven primarily by the fishing industry. The economy diversified greatly after the country joined the European Economic Area in 1994, but Iceland was especially hard hit by the global financial crisis in the years following 2008. Literacy, longevity, and social cohesion are first rate by world standards.

GEOGRAPHY

Location	Northern Europe, island between the Greenland Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean, northwest of the United Kingdom
Area	total: 103,000 sq km country comparison to the world: <u>107</u> land: 100,250 sq km water: 2,750 sq km
Climate	temperate; moderated by North Atlantic Current; mild, windy winters; damp, cool summers
Natural Resources	fish, hydropower, geothermal power, diatomite
Total Renewable Water Resources	170 cu km (2005)
Freshwater Withdrawal	total: 0.17 cu km/yr (34%/66%/0%) per capita: 567 cu m/yr (2003)
Natural Hazards	earthquakes and volcanic activity volcanism: Iceland, situated on top of a hotspot, experiences severe volcanic activity; Eyjafjallajokull (elev. 1,666 m, 5,466 ft) erupted in 2010, sending ash high into the atmosphere and seriously disrupting European air traffic; scientists continue to monitor nearby Katla (elev. 1,512 m, 4,961 ft), which has a high probability of eruption in the very near future, potentially disrupting air traffic; Grimsvotn and Hekla are Iceland's most frequently active volcanoes; other historically active volcanoes include Askja, Bardarbunga, Brennisteinsfjoll, Esjufjoll, Hengill, Krafla, Krisuvik, Kverkfjoll,

	Oraefajokull, Reykjanes, Torfajokull, and Vestmannaeyjar
Environmental Issues	water pollution from fertilizer runoff; inadequate wastewater treatment
PEOPLE	
Population	308,910 (July 2010 est.) country comparison to the world: 178
Ethnic Groups	homogeneous mixture of descendants of Norse and Celts 94%, population of foreign origin 6%
Religions	Lutheran Church of Iceland 80.7%, Roman Catholic Church 2.5%, Reykjavik Free Church 2.4%, Hafnarfjorour Free Church 1.6%, other religions 3.6%, unaffiliated 3%, other or unspecified 6.2% (2006 est.)
Languages	Icelandic, English, Nordic languages, German widely spoken
Literacy Rate	definition: age 15 and over can read and write total population: 99% male: 99% female: 99% (2003 est.)
Major Infectious Diseases	
GOVERNMENT	
Type	constitutional republic
Independence	1 December 1918 (became a sovereign state under the Danish Crown); 17 June 1944 (from Denmark)
Constitution	16 June 1944, effective 17 June 1944; amended many times
Legal System	civil law system based on Danish law; has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction
ECONOMY	
Agricultural Products	potatoes, green vegetables; mutton, chicken, pork, beef, dairy products; fish
Industries	fish processing; aluminum smelting, ferrosilicon production; geothermal power, hydropower, tourism
Import commodities	machinery and equipment, petroleum products, foodstuffs, textiles
Import Partners	Norway 12.97%, Netherlands 8.62%, Germany 8.3%, Sweden 8.03%, Denmark 7.27%, US

	6.94%, China 4.98%, UK 4.55%, Brazil 4.09% (2009)
Export Commodities	fish and fish products 40%, aluminum, animal products, ferrosilicon, diatomite
Export Partners	Netherlands 30.71%, UK 12.73%, Germany 11.21%, Norway 5.75%, Spain 4.82% (2009)
Per Capita GDP	<p>\$38,400 (2010 est.)</p> <p>country comparison to the world: 26</p> <p>\$40,000 (2009 est.)</p> <p>\$43,300 (2008 est.)</p> <p><i>note: data are in 2010 US dollars</i></p>
Population below poverty line	NA%

*CITATIONS: All information included above is extracted from the CIA World Factbook except where noted.

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General	
Life Expectancy at Birth (in years)	82.1 years
Average number of years in School (in years)	10.4 years
Gross National Income Per Capita (In US Dollars)	\$22,917
Gender Inequality	
Female Seats in Parliament (%)	33.3%
Population with at least a Secondary Education Female (% Of 25 and older)	66.3%
Population with at least a Secondary Education Male (% Of 25 and older)	57.7%
Labor Force Participation Female (%)	81.7%
Labor Force Participation Male (%)	89.9%
Births Attended by Skilled Health Professionals (%)	--
Poverty	
Population surviving on \$1.25 per day (%)	--
Empowerment	
Number of Journalists Imprisoned	0
Corruption Victims (% of people who face a bribe situation in the last year)	5%
Political Engagement (% percent of people who voiced opinion to public officials)	37%

Sustainability	
Fossil Fuels as Primary Energy Source (%)	19%
Renewable Resources as Primary Energy Source (%)	81%
Population without Access to Water (%)	0
Population Without Access to Sanitation Services (%)	0
Population affected by natural disasters (% between 2000-2009)	<.01%
Human Security	
Number of Refugees leaving this country	0
Number of Internally Displaced People in This Country	--
Prevalence of Undernourishment (%)	<5%
Demographics	
Urban Residents (% of total Population)	91.4%
Health	
HIV Prevalence in Female Youth (% ages 15-24)	.1%
HIV Prevalence in Male Youth (% ages 15-24)	.2%
HIV Prevalence in Adults (% ages 15-49)	.2%
Other	
Official Development Assistance Per Capita (in US dollars)	--
Population without Electricity (%)	--

